

DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE METHOD AND APPARATUSAbstract of the Disclosure

5 A cellular telephone subscriber who wishes
directory assistance services is connected in the
conventional manner to an operator who identifies a
destination telephone number desired by the subscriber.
As in the prior art, the operator then initiates a call
connecting the subscriber to the destination telephone
10 number. In a preferred embodiment, the operator locates
a desired destination telephone number in a computer
database, and can select automatic dialing of the
located number. Further, rather than dropping all
further involvement with the call, the preferred
15 embodiment of the present invention continually monitors
the connection thereby established for a predetermined
DTMF signal issued by the customer, such as that
obtained by pressing the "*" button. If such a signal
is detected, the customer is transferred to a directory
20 assistance operator, who can then provide whatever
further assistance is needed (e.g. redialing a busy
number, or providing further directory assistance).
This feature can be disabled, manually or automatically,
if the destination number makes its own use of the DTMF
25 signals.